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C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 002607

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/06/2015

TAGS: [ETTC](#) [TSPA](#) [KNNP](#) [KSCA](#) [IN](#) [NSSP](#)

SUBJECT: INDIA SPACE COOPERATION AGENDA FOR FM SING'S VISIT

REF: A. NEW DELHI 1690

[B](#). STATE 4483

[C](#). 2004 NEW DELHI 6217

Classified By: SCIENCE COUNSELOR MARCO DI CAPUA, REASON 1.4 (B, D)

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request cable see paragraph 8.

[1](#)2. (SBU) In preparation for the visit of the Foreign Minister, Science Counselor talked with ISRO Scientific Secretary, V Sundararmiah, who will be accompanying the

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Foreign Minister to Washington to find out what maybe on ISRO's agenda for the Washington meetings. Sundararmiah will travel to Washington a day before the Minister to meet with US counterparts. He told Science Counselor that the ideas for Space cooperation that ISRO will bring to the table are:

- The LANDSAT Continuation Mission - For this mission, ISRO seeks a contract from NOAA or the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA, formerly known as NIMA) to build a satellite (which would not contain US components) and launch it with the PSLV Launcher. Such a satellite would replace the LANDSAT Satellite, which failed in orbit. In India's mind, the demise of LANDSAT leaves a substantial gap in the needs of the NGA.

- Develop a direct linkage with NASA Programs - Such a linkage would allow ISRO to collaborate with NASA in scientific missions without the need to continually undergo a lengthy approval process to get collaborations under way.

- Resolve the TAA issue for the Applied Physics Laboratory mini-SAR instrument for the Chandrayann Moon Mission.

Mini-SAR TAA

[1](#)3. (SBU) Science Counselor reiterated to Sundararmiah the points made in State 44853 regarding the TAA as an agreement between APL and the US Government that grants export authorization to a US person that wishes to engage in technical cooperation with a foreign person. Science Counselor reiterated that ISRO's signature in the document acknowledges the obligations that APL is undertaking with the US Government in regard to the cooperation between APL and ISRO.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Sundararmiah replied that ISRO views the TAA document in a different light. In ISRO's view, by signing the agreement, ISRO is becoming part of an agreement, provisions of which it objects to.

MEA Frustration with ISRO

[1](#)5. (C) Science Counselor and Political Counselor met MEA Joint Secretary US and Canada, Dr. S. Jaishankar, on April 5 to go over the challenges that obtaining ISRO approval of the mini-SAR TAA represents. Embassy shared with Jaishankar State 44853 as a non-paper. Science Counselor shared with Jaishankar ISRO objections as spelled out in paragraph 4 above. Jaishankar expressed frustration with ISRO's approach to dealing with necessary paperwork. Science Counselor passed onto Jaishankar the same version of the TAA he emailed to the India desk on 24 March 2005. Jaishankar offered to get in touch with ISRO to get ISRO to understand the need to make some progress on the TAA.

[1](#)6. (C) Following-up with the MEA meeting, MEA Joint Secretary Jaishankar called Sundararmiah at ISRO requesting

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that ISRO demonstrate some flexibility to move the mini-SAR TAA forward.

[1](#)7. (SBU) Following Jaishankar's entreaties to ISRO, Science Counselor called ISRO Scientific Secretary Sundararmiah. Sundararmiah made a face-saving motion requesting that the US return to ISRO the mini-SAR TAA marked-up text so that ISRO can look it over before Sundararmiah departs for the United States. Sundararmiah said that a negotiable text is essential so that Sundararmiah can propose final text in

Washington on April 12th.

18. (SBU) Action Request: Mission requests Department return mini-SAR TAA marked-up text to ISRO in advance of Sundararmiah's departure to the United States.
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